

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-71 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-3, 5-32 and 51-61 have been canceled above without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to pursue these claims in a later filed application claiming the benefit of priority to the above-identified application. Following entry of the amendment, claims 33-50 and 62-71 will be under examination.

The specification has been amended to include reference signs 13-16 identifying the automated features of claims 48-50 and 65-71. Additionally, the Brief Description of the Drawings has been amended to include a description of corrected drawing Figure 4C. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 1-5 and at pages 25 and 26. Accordingly, the amendments to the specification do not raise an issue of new matter.

Claim 38 has been amended above. Support for the amendment can be found throughout the application as filed. In particular, support for the amendment can be found, for example, in claim 38 as originally filed and, for example, at page 16, lines 10-11 and lines 19-23, and at page 17, lines 6-13 and lines 16-17. Accordingly, the amendments do not raise an issue of new matter and entry thereof is respectfully requested.

Applicant acknowledges that the Office Action mailed February 26, 2004, indicates that claims 33-37, 39-50, 62-68 and 71 are in condition for allowance. Further claim 38 stands objected to for certain informalities. Applicant has amended claim 38 above to correct the informality. Claims 69 and 71 stand objected to under

37 C.F.R. § 1.75 allegedly for being a substantial duplicate of claim 49. Claims 49 and 71 have been canceled above without prejudice. Therefore, this ground of objection is moot. Accordingly, the amendments place the application in condition for allowance and do not raise new issues for consideration. Applicant therefore respectfully requests entry of the amendments and issuance of a Notice of Allowability.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F. R. § 1.83(q) allegedly for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. The automated system features recited in claims 48-50 and 65-71 are asserted to be required in a separate view sufficient for a proper understanding of the invention.

Applicant submits herewith a corrected drawing including a further view of Figure 4 that shows automated features of an automated system of the invention as Figure 4C. Attached is an annotated Figure 4A showing the automated features of claims 48-50 and 65-71 and a corrected drawing corresponding to Figure 4C. Support for corrected Figure 4C can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 1-5, and at pages 25 and 26. No new matter is introduced by corrected Figure 4C and entry thereof is respectfully requested. Accordingly, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 19-23, 28-32, 51, 53, and 59 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Ebbing, U.S. Patent No. 5,648,847, in view of Demiryont, U.S. Patent No. 6,416,194). Claims 5, 52, 54, 55, 60 and 61 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Ebbing in view of Demiryont as applied to claims 1, 53 and 59 and further in view of Walker et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,813,172, and Koso, U.S. Patent No. 4,801,810. Claims 8-11, 13-18, 24-27 and 56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Ebbing in view of Demiryont as applied to claims 19 and 23 and further in view of Bayrock et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,353,657. The cited combination references are alleged to teach or suggest the claimed invention with a reasonable expectation of success. Further, Demiryont is alleged to be admitted prior art.

Applicant notes that Demiryont is newly cited by the Office and that Applicant has not previously addressed this reference. Therefore, Demiryont cannot be admitted by Applicant to be prior art. Further, claims 1-3, 5-32 and 51-61 have been cancelled above without prejudice. Therefore, these grounds of rejection are moot and withdrawal is respectfully requested.

App. No. 09/847,466
Office Action: February 26, 2004
Response Date: August 25, 2004
Page: 15 of 15

To the extent necessary, a Petition for an Extension of Time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 02-0915 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerrit J. van den Engh

By: 

Delbert J. Barnard
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 20,515
(206) 381-3100

DJB/jm

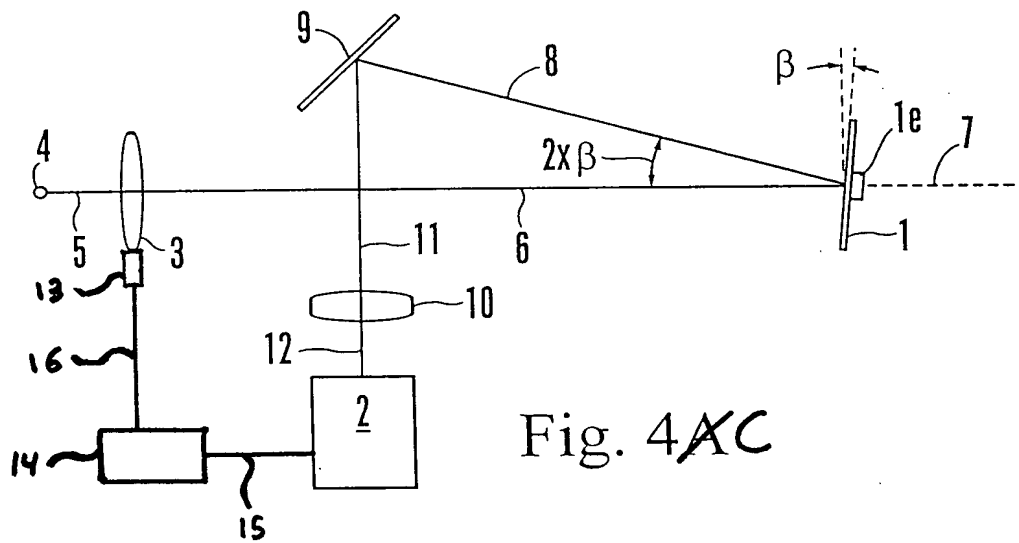


Fig. 4AC

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawings include changes to Figure 4. This sheet amends Figure 4 to include Figure 4C. In Figure 4C, the previously omitted automated features of an automated system of the invention are shown as reference signs 13-16.